December 2, 1914.

The Chairman,
Senate Committee on the Library,
United States Senate.

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Sir:

The Senate Committee on the Library has honored the Commission of Fine Arts by referring to them the following bills for report:

S. 5194, 63d Congress, 2d Session, providing for the erection in Washington, D. C., of a statue to the memory of General John Sullivan, and
S. 1396, 63d Congress, 1st Session, providing for the erection in Washington D. C., of a monument to the memory of Matthew Fontaine Maury, of Virginia.

The Commission find themselves under certain embarrassment in formulating reports on these bills and others of similar import. The question which they present is as to the expediency of the Government commemorating the persons or the events indicated; and the Commission hesitate to express an opinion on historical subjects. Strictly speaking, the function of the Commission is limited to passing upon the merits of works of art at some stage or stages of their execution; or to suggesting the methods of procuring suitable and worthy works of art; or to giving advice as to locations and the landscape settings appropriate to such works. The Commission conceive that their advice in regard to memorials begins when Congress has determined that the person or the event shall be commemorated by a work of art.

At the same time the Commission realize keenly the desirability of a comprehensive, systematic plan by which the Government shall commemorate those persons and those events which have become an integral part of our history. Such action is the expression of feelings which do honor to the Nation; and thereby lessons of patriotism are taught to future generations. Moreover, in the development of the Mall, of Potomac Park, and of the newer portions of the city of Washington there is opportunity to place to advantage works of commemorate art. The first question is the selection of the persons and the events to be so commemorated.

A haphazard selection based on the enthusiasms of the hour; and also the practice of leaving the choice to associations or societies of a patriotic character most often result in a distortion of historic perspective. The Government itself has gained rather than lost by seeming delays in taking action to commemorate its heroes. The Washington Monument was not undertaken by Congress until about 1878, after private initiative had failed; the Lincoln and the Grant memorials are now in process of erection. Meantime, the majority of available sites for works of art in the central portion of the city of Washington have long been occupied by the statues of men subordinate to General Grant in the war for the preservation of the Union.

The motives that actuated the associations which contributed the statues of the generals are most praiseworthy; but, as time goes on, the lack of historic balance will become more and more apparent, unless Congress shall take upon itself to devise and carry out some well-considered plan for the selection of the subject to be commemorated. As it is, only two Presidents, no one of the great financiers, and only one statesman and one jurist find places among the Washington statues intended as ornaments to the city. Yet numbers of the conspicuous locations in the city are occupied by statues of persons who have played either no part or but a subordinate one in the development of the nation. The very fact that it is now comparatively easy to raise an amount of money sufficient to procure a statue to occupy a prominent location for all time tends to overload the avenues and parks with that form of art least likely to give lasting pleasure.

These considerations lead the Commission of Fine Arts to suggest to the Committee on the Library that the whole subject of the adornment of Washington by commemorative works of art be referred to a body to be created for that purpose by Congress; and that one or more historians of recognized standing be appointed to act with representatives of the Government in formulating a plan of procedure. With such a body the Commission of Fine Arts would be pleased to act in so far as their advice on matters of art might be required.

The Commission desire to say further that all memorials designed to be located in Washington should be, first of all, works of art. Portrait statues as portraits are not desirable objects of ornament for parks or thoroughfares. It often happens that a given site would best be occupied by a fountain, ~~by a fountain,~~ by a reproduction of a work of art that has been famous through the centuries, by the representation of some object in nature, or in any one of the many ways in which the artist finds expression for his ideas. If the city of Washington is to have an adornment worthy of its great plan, its spacious parks, and its noble buildings, the time has come to formulate a systematic and comprehensive method of making selections and expending such appropriations as Congress may see fit to make for the purchase of works of art.

By direction of the Commission:

Very respectfully,

WM. W. HARTS.

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

December 14, 1914.

The Chairman,

Senate Committee on the Library,

United States Senate.

Sir:

The Commission of Fine Arts, to whom were referred S. 5916, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "for erecting a suitable monument over the grave of Admiral David D. Porter, in Arlington National Cemetery", - S. 2440, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "providing for the erection of a suitable monument on the grave of Major General Henry W. Lawton in Arlington National Cemetery, in the State of Virginia", - and S. 4253, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "To authorize the Secretary of the Navy to erect a suitable monument over the remains of Rear Admiral Charles Wilkes, United States Navy, in the national cemetery at Arlington, Virginia", - respectfully report:

For the sake of the beauty, dignity, and solemn impressiveness of Arlington Cemetery, and of all the monuments erected and to be erected there, it is of the utmost importance that every individual monument should be simple in treatment and limited in size. For these reasons, on artistic grounds alone, the Commission believe that it would be wise for Congress to limit the appropriation for any such monument to one thousand dollars.

The wording of S. 2440, providing for the "purchase and erection" of a monument seems open to possible objection as compared with the more usual form which provides for "procuring and erecting a monument", in that it might be interpreted as hampering the authority of the executive officer to contract for the creation of a monument not already in existence.

In this connection the Commission desire to call attention to recommendations made during the year to the Chief of the Quartermaster Corps, United States Army, in charge of Arlington Cemetery, regarding the design of monument in that cemetery. The Commission recommended that systematic measures should be adopted for controlling in the future at least the more extreme vagaries of individual taste in the design of monuments in order to maintain in the cemetery as whole something of that impressively harmonious and dignified effect, which Mr. Saint-Gaudens noted in the following passage:

> "Nothing could be more impressive than the rank after rank of white stones, inconspicuous in themselves, covering the gentle, wooded slopes, and producing the desired effect of a vast army in its last resting place. Those spaces reserved for burials of officers and their families, however, exhibit all the heterogeneous forms which disturb those very ideas of peace and quiet which should characterize a spot sacred to the tenderest feelings of the human heart.".

As a means of limiting the excessive and competing diversities of character among the monuments and of emphasizing the essentially military character of the cemetery

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it was further suggested that monuments erected to individual officers hereafter should be made to conform to certain broad requirements, fixing at least the maximum and probably the minimum over all dimensions for monuments to officers of each military rank, and possibly laying down certain other broad limitations suitably graded according to rank. Such regulations can be so drawn as to give ample scope for the greatest artistic ability in the design of individual monuments, while greatly reducing the discordant competition between adjacent and wholly unrelated types of design. No regulations can ensure that the greatest generals shall have the most beautiful and worthy monuments but it is possible to ensure that a beautiful and appropriate monument to a great general shall not be put out of countenance by the accident of an adjacent self-assertive and overconspicuous monument to some unimportant subordinate. In addition to such standing regulations fixing definite limits of size and perhaps some other easily stated general limitations, it would be desirable to have some systematic arbitrary censorship over all designs for gravestones and monuments, in order to maintain a steady pressure in favor of simplicity of design and harmony with the surroundings.

The Commission submit herewith photographs showing, on the one hand, some of the heterogeneous and artistically deplorable results of the lack of any system and of any effective limitation upon the size and character of grave monuments erected at Arlington, and, on the other hand, the impressive "rank after rank of white stones, inconspicuous in themselves, covering the gentle, wooded slopes, and producing the effect of a vast army in its last resting place", and a portion of the cemetery devoted to officers' graves in which by good fortune the diversity in the monuments is less pronounced than elsewhere.

By direction of the Commission:

Very respectfully,

WM. W. HARTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

The fourth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1915 was held in their office at 1729 New York avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Friday, January 8, 1915. The following members were present:

Mr. French, the Chairman;

Mr. Olmsted;

Mr. Gilbert;

Mr. Hastings;

Mr. Moore;

Mr. Blashfield;

Mr. Anderson;

also Colonel Wm. W. Harts, the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a. m., and proceeded at once to the business before it.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: The minutes of the preceding meeting, held on November 25, 1914, were presented and approved.

2. EMPLOYMENT OF TEMPORARY STENOGRAPHER AND TYPEWRITER: The Commission authorized the Secretary to employ a stenographer and typewriter for a period of about thirty days at the rate of $75.00 per month. These services will be required because of the absence of their clerk while installing the Commission's exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco.

3. PLANS FOR INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICE BUILDING: The Secretary read a letter from Acting Secretary of the Treasury Newton suggesting that the Commission call at the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury and there inspect the plans being prepared for the proposed new office

building to house bureaus of the Interior Department. This inspection was made later in the day, when the Supervising Architect, Mr. Wenderoth, accompanied the Commission and personally explained the details of the various studies made. The Commission found the general design excellent (See Exhibit A).

4. FULL-SIZED MODEL OF FEMALE FIGURE FOR GUILFORD C. H. MONUMENT: Mr. French reported that he had inspected the full-sized model of the female figure for the Guilford C. H., N. C., monument, at the studio of Mr. F. H. Packer, the sculptor, and recommended its approval by the Commission. The Commission accepted Mr. French's report and recommended the acceptance of the model to the War Department.

5. PAINTING ENTITLED "THE DEATH OF BREVET LT. COL. ALONZO H. CUSHING AT GETTYSBURG": At the request of the Senate Committee on the Library the Commission inspected a painting by H. E. Brown entitled "The Death of Brevet Lt. Col. Alonzo H. Cushing at Gettysburg," the purchase of which is proposed in Senate Bill 4074, 63d Congress, 2d Session. The painting did not have sufficient artistic merit to warrant its acquisition by the Government, and the Senate Committee was so informed (See Exhibit B).

6. COMPLETION OF FRIEZE IN ROTUNDA OF CAPITOL: The Commission next considered the request of the Senate Committee on the Library for a report upon S. J. Res. 156, 63d Congress, 2d Session, providing for the completion of the historical frieze in the Rotunda of the Capitol. After an inspection of this frieze later in the day the Commission decided to

recommend that nothing be done to complete the frieze. They felt that to complete it by filling the empty space with work of real merit would only serve to emphasize the shortcomings of the present portion, while it would be a waste of money to finish the frieze with work as unacceptable as that already done (See Exhibit C).

not approved

7. ERECTION OF MONUMENTS IN CANAL ZONE TO DE LESSEPS AND UNIVERSAL PEACE: The request of the Senate Committee on the Library for report upon S. 4472, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "To provide for the erection of a statue at the Panama Canal to be symbolic of universal peace," and upon S. 4882, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "To erect a monument to Ferdinand de Lesseps" in the Canal Zone then received attention. Mr. French and Mr. Olmsted, the members of the Commission's committee which had visited and inspected the Canal Zone, both stated that they had been unable to find a favorable site for a monument along the Canal, and that on account of the size and scale of the work and the general utilitarian character of the canal it would be extremely difficult to design a monument that would not be inconsistent with the conditions surrounding this structure. Mr. Olmsted and Mr. Moore had already been appointed a committee to draft reports on these bills, and their report, containing the above impressions, is attached hereto under Exhibit D.

8. 25 OIL PAINTINGS OF FORMER JUSTICES OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT: The Secretary next brought before the meeting the request of the Senate Committee on the Library for a report upon H. R. 17041, 63d Congress, 2d Session, proposing the acquisition of 25 portraits of various former justices of the United States Supreme Court, painted by Albert

Rosenthal of Philadelphia. Mr. Moore stated that he had communicated with Mr. Justice Pitney of the Supreme Court regarding these paintings, but had not yet received a reply. They had been examined by the Commission at a former meeting, but the members wished to make another inspection before finally reporting. This was done later in the day, when it was decided to recommend the acquisition of the paintings of all the justices except the more recent ones, the latter being those of Justices Peckham, Brown, Harlan, Brewer, and Moody (See Exhibit E).

9. SITE AND DESIGN FOR MONUMENT TO ALFRED NOBLE: Mr. Glenn Brown, architectural adviser to a committee on a monument to Alfred Noble of the American Society of Civil Engineers, appeared at 11 o'clock for a conference regarding a site and design for that monument. About $25,000 will be available for the monument. Mr. Brown stated that after a survey of all available sites for a monument of this size and character he recommended its location in Rawlins Square, immediately to the south of the site for the proposed new building for the Interior Department. He submitted sketches showing the position the monument would occupy in that location as well as the architectural treatment proposed for the reservation when the monument is placed. The Commission informed Mr. Brown that they would approve the site and the general character of monument his report suggests.

10. PLANS FOR RESERVATIONS 19, 19A, 29, 322, 319, and 318: The Commission next inspected and approved plans for the improvement of reservations 19, 19A, 29, 322, and 319, prepared in and submitted by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds. A plan for the improvement of reservation 318 was

approved with suggestions regarding the modification of the lines of a central path shown.

11. TENNIS PAVILION FOR WEST POTOMAC PARK: The plan for a tennis pavilion for West Potomac Park submitted by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds was next discussed. The Commission felt that a smaller structure than the one shown and of temporary character would be advisable.

12. PARK LODGE IN GARFIELD PARK: A preliminary sketch for a playground lodge in Garfield Park, prepared by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, was approved.

13. BATHING BEACH AND PAVILIONS ON THE TIDAL BASIN: Plans for a bathing beach and pavilions on the Tidal Basin, prepared and submitted by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, were considered of much interest in themselves, but indicated to the Commission the undesirability of such a scheme as part of the Tidal Basin. They felt it to be very necessary to obtain complete studies of the whole area from the proposed athletic field in East Potomac Park northward and northwesterly to that portion of West Potomac Park and the Monument Grounds already studied, and they requested Colonel Harts to present studies to the Commission for the treatment of this whole area. The Commission felt that the matter of the beach and pavilions should be held up until further study had been made of this area.

14. PLANTING PLAN FOR WEST POTOMAC PARK IMMEDIATELY EAST OF LINCOLN MEMORIAL SITE: The next matter to receive consideration was a planting plan prepared by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds for that portion

of Potomac Park immediately east of the Lincoln Memorial site. The members went into this matter at considerable length and made a number of suggestions to the Officer in charge and Mr. Burnap, landscape architect under that office. The most important of these were that four rows of trees, 20 feet apart, would be the correct treatment for bordering the proposed lagoon, and that an open vista, not less than 100 feet wide, should be opened along the minor axis through the cross panel of the lagoon, thus restoring the diagonal vista suggested in the Park Commission plans.

15. BILL TO AID IN ERECTION OF MONUMENT TO GARFIELD AT LONG BRANCH, N. J.: During the meeting a request was received from the Senate Committee on the Library for a report upon Senate Bill 4218, 63d Congress, 2d Session, appropriating $10,000 to aid in the erection of a monument in memory of the late President James A. Garfield at Long Branch, N.J. The Commission felt that the only recommendation to be made from the artistic side was that a provision that the design shall meet with the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts should be included in order to protect the United States from the selection of an unsuitable design (See Exhibit F).

16. The Commission thereupon left the office, at 1:20 p. m., and proceeded to the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury where they inspected the progress plans for the proposed new building for the Interior Department. They then went to the Capitol where, after a short interval for luncheon, they inspected the frieze in the Rotunda of the Capitol, and later, in the office of the House Committee on the Library, the various paintings of former justices of the United States Supreme Court by Mr. Rosenthal.

The Commission then adjourned, at 3:45 p. m., subject to the call of the Chairman. Approved: David E. Finley. Mc H Kess

CHAIRMAN Col, U. S. A. SECRETARY.

January 9, 1915.

Hon. Byron R. Newton,

Acting Secretary of the Treasury.

Sir:

Following your suggestion of January 2, 1915, the Commission of Fine Arts yesterday examined at the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury the plans and design for the new Interior Department Office Building. The Commission found the design to be excellent.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

WM. W. HARTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

"A"

January 5, 1916.

Hon. Byron R. Newton,

Acting Secretary of the Treasury.

Sir:

Following your suggestion of January 3, 1916, the Commission of Fine Arts yesterday examined at the office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury the plans and design for the new Interior Department Office Building. The Commission found the design to be excellent.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

W. V. Cowen

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

January 9, 1915.

Sir:

In compliance with your request the Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting held yesterday, inspected the painting by H. E. Brown entitled "The Death of Brevet Lieut. Col. Alonzo H. Cushing at Gettysburg", the purchase of which is proposed in Senate Bill 4074, 63d Congress, 2d Session. In the opinion of the Commission the painting does not possess sufficient artistic merit to warrant its acquisition by the United States.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

WM. W. HARTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. Luke Lea,

Chairman, Committee on the Library,

United States Senate.

"B"

January 9, 1913.

Sir:

In compliance with your request the Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting held yesterday, inspected the painting by H. S. Brown entitled "The Death of Brevet Lieut. Col. Alonzo H. Cushing at Gettysburg", the purchase of which is proposed in Senate Bill 4074, 62d Congress, 2d Session. In the opinion of the Commission the painting does not possess sufficient artistic merit to warrant its acquisition by the United States.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

WM. V. HUNTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. Luke Lea,

Chairman, Committee on the Library,

United States Senate.

January 16, 1915.

Sir:

The Commission of Fine Arts have given careful consideration to your request of June 30, 1914, for report upon an amendment intended to be proposed to H. R. 17041, 63d Congress, 2d Session, providing for the purchase of oil portraits of Justices of the United States Supreme Court Blair, Wilson, Iredell, Thomas Johnson, Chase, Patterson (wrongly stated as Pattison in the amendment), Thompson, Wayne, Washington, Moore, William Johnson, Todd, Duval, Livingston, Trimble, Baldwin, Barbour, McKinley, McLean, Cushing, Peckham, Brown, Harlan, Brewer, and Moody (twenty-five in all), which were painted by Mr. Albert Rosenthal.

The Commission have the honor to report that, if the historic importance of the portraits is considered by Congress to be sufficient, the artistic quality is good enough to justify the purchase of the following portraits: namely those of Justices Blair, Wilson, Iredell, Thomas Johnson, Chase, Patterson, Thompson, Wayne, Washington, Moore, William Johnson, Todd, Duval, Livingston, Trimble, Baldwin, Barbour, McKinley, McLean, and Cushing; but beg to reserve their recommendation with reference to the five remaining portraits until their next meeting.

At the same time the Commission desire to suggest to your committee the advisability of gradually creating a permanent and complete collection of such portraits, and that, in order to ensure adequacy in their painting, as well as of other portraits to be owned by the Government, some regular procedure be approximately followed. In order to establish such a procedure it is suggested that several portrait painters of national reputation should be invited to furnish a list of artists who in their opinion would be able and willing to paint for a reasonable sum in each case, adequate portraits from available data, and that such a list should at all times be available to the committee in charge of the question of such portrait painting.

The portraits so purchased should be preserved as historical documents of national import, and should not necessarily occupy any specific position; but when a specific position should be definitely allotted to them, it should be determined by experts and with a view to their decorative availability as well as to their historic importance.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

(Signed) WM. W. HARTS.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. Luke Lea,
Chairman, Committee on the Library,
United States Senate.

E

January 9, 1915.

Sir:

The Commission of Fine Arts acknowledge the reference, for report, of Senate Bill 4218, 63d Congress, 2d Session, "Appropriating $10,000 to aid in the erection of a monument in memory of the late President James A. Garfield, at Long Branch, New Jersey".

The Commission direct me to inform you that, should Congress deem it desirable to aid in the construction of the proposed monument as specified in the bill, from the artistic side it would seem advisable to insert a provision that the design shall meet with the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts. Such a provision would protect the United States from the selection of an unsuitable design.

Respectfully,

WM. W. HARTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. Luke Lea,

Chairman, Committee on the Library,

United States Senate.

F